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Manistee Roper Romp to feature games, prizes, more

By **Kyle Kotecki**, *Staff Writer*
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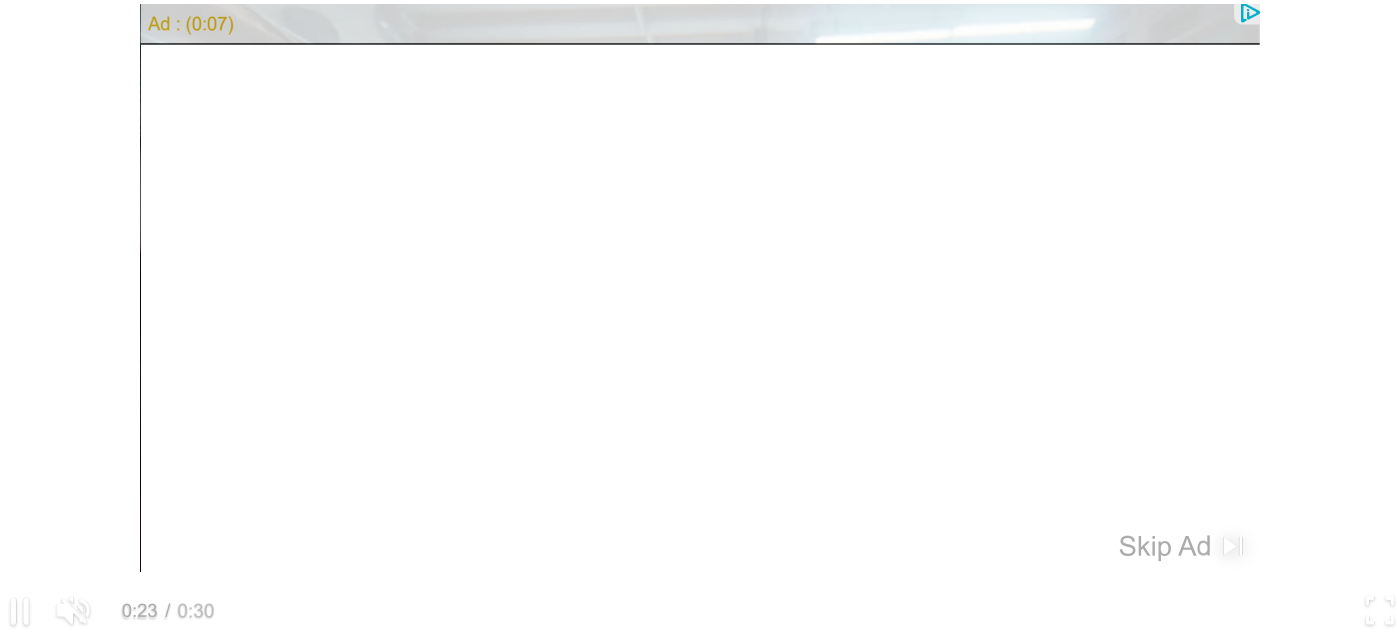
Paula Laws (left) enjoys a Roper Romp Sept. 14, 2024 in Ypsilanti. Laws is organizing a romp in Manistee, which is scheduled for Oct. 26.
Submitted photo/Paula Laws

MANISTEE — Downtown Manistee may soon be invaded by people in red, curly wigs and brightly colored kaftans.



Manistee resident Paula Laws is organizing an event known as a Roper Romp, which she says have become popular throughout the country.

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"It's based on the character Helen Roper from the '70s show 'Three's Company.' She was Stanley Roper's wife — he was the landlord," Laws said. "Back in 2013, this group down in New Orleans decided to dress up as Helen Roper and walk in a parade down there, and it kind of gained a life of its own. Now they do Roper Romps all across the country. They have them in Canada, and I've even seen them as far as Australia."

Eventually, Laws decided she wanted to bring the fun to Manistee.

"I just kind of had been following what had been going on around the country with them and I thought, 'This sounds fun,'" she said. "I shared it on Facebook and a lot of people around here seemed kind of interested, so I thought why not have one here? It kind of took off from there.

"I've been organizing this one by myself but a lot of people have come forward offering to help," Laws continued. "I've had some businesses contact me to donate prizes for some of the games we're going to do."

The romp is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. on Oct. 26 — the day of the Manistee Fall Festival — in front of TJ's Pub.

"We are going to have a selfie scavenger hunt," Laws said. "Each participant will get a list of things to get a selfie with while they're hunting for two Flat Stanley Ropers that I'll be hiding at a couple different businesses downtown on River Street. When they find those, those people get prizes."

Paula Laws (left) enjoys a Roper Romp Sept. 14, 2024 in Ypsilanti. Laws is organizing a romp in Manistee, which is scheduled for Oct. 26.

Submitted photo/Paula Laws

After the scavenger hunt, the group will make its way to the Manistee Elks Club at 4:30 p.m. for some "Three's Company-" and Helen Roper-themed trivia.

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"The winner there will get a prize. Then at 5:30 p.m. we're going to meet at The Outsider and do a cornhole-in-one contest," Laws said. "Then we'll have dinner together and get a group photo by the fountain. It will be fun."

Laws said anyone interested in participating simply needs to dress the part and show up.

"They can dress in a kaftan and a red wig as Helen Roper, or they can dress as their favorite 'Three's Company' character," she said. "If they want to come as Chrissy or Jack or Stanley Roper, they can do that. They just need to meet up with us at 3 p.m. in front of TJ's on Saturday, Oct. 26. Then they can participate and win prizes."

The event is for those 18 and up.

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"It's a pub crawl, but it's not centered around alcohol," Laws said. "I would say 18 and up is appropriate, because TJ's and Elks and Outsider are all going to have mocktails as well as cocktails."

Laws said if this month's romp goes well she would like to hold more in the future as fundraisers for local charities.

"I hope to do some different events throughout the year, just a couple of them throughout the year, and then this can be the big event every year during Fall Festival or something," she said. "I definitely would like to somehow make it into a fundraiser for Homeward Bound, Blessings in a Backpack, some of the local charities somehow — I just have to figure out how to do that."